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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Research Service
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PINK BOLLWORM CONTROL

NATURE OF THE PEST

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The pink bollworm is considered the most destructive pest of cotton. The female bollworm moth becomes active at dusk when it deposits from 100 to 200 eggs inside the calyx of the cotton boll or on squares. The young worms bore into the boll or square where they feed for 10 to 14 days. The period from egg to adult is about 25 days. There are 4 to 6 generations a year. The damage results from the larva feeding inside the boll, hollowing out the seed and cutting and staining the lint.

CROPS AFFECTED

Cotton is the principal crop affected. Okra is also under regulation against movement from cotton producing areas because it may become infested when grown in proximity to heavily infested cotton.

DAMAGE AND ESTIMATED LOSSES

Due to vigorous control measures the pink bollworm damage has been held extremely low except in 1952 when heavy infestation in 29 counties in southern Texas resulted in approximately a 30 million dollar loss. The potential damage should this insect become established throughout the United States could amount to several hundred million dollars annually.

CONTROL PROGRAM

The pink bollworm occurs in commercial cotton producing areas of Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. Limited areas in Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana and New Mexico are under quarantine. All of Oklahoma and Texas are under regulation although many counties in each State have little or no infestation. The pink bollworm is present in wild cotton in certain counties in Florida where eradication of the host plant is under way. A primary responsibility is the enforcement of quarantine measures in cooperation with the affected States. There is active participation in control measures within the infested States to reduce infestation, thereby preventing spread by natural means from heavily infested fields. Weather conditions favorable to the insect resulted in a considerable spread during the period 1950 to 1953. Eradication of incipient outbreaks not subject to immediate re-infestation from focal points remains a prime objective.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

This program is conducted under authority of the provision of the Plant Quarantine Act of 1912, as amended (7 U.S.C. 151-167), the Organic Act of 1944, as amended (7 U.S.C. 147a) and the Act of February 8, 1930 (46 Stat. 67).

July 7, 1954



